

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 XMB-07 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

OPIC-12 AID-20 IGA-02 SS-15 NSC-10 L-03 CIAE-00

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FR, GB

SUBJECT: BONGO VISIT TO PARIS

1. GABONESE PRESIDENT BONGO HAS RECENTLY BEEN IN PARIS AND BRUSSELS ON PRIVATE VISIT. DURING HIS STAY IN PARIS HE LUNCHEDED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR COOPERATION DENIAU AND CALLED UPON PRIME MINISTER MESSMER. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS OF THESE MEETINGS, BONGO CONCENTRATED ON SUBJECT OF AID AND PARTICULARLY TRANSGABON RAILWAY PROJECT. BONGO ANNOUNCED THAT FRENCH WOULD PARTICIPATE IN PROJECT UP TO TOTAL OF 30 MILLION FRANCS CFA AND ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE LOOKED AT IN

FUTURE.

2. FOLLOWING LUNCHEON WITH DENIAU, BONGO WAS ASKED ABOUT FRANCO- GABONESE COOPERATION AGREEMENTS. HE SAID THAT COOPERATION OUGHT TO BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE AND CERTAIN OF ITS ASPECTS ADAPTED TO CURRENT SITUATION. GABON, HE INSISTED, WOULD NOT BE PETTY SINCE ACCORDS DO NOT POSE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS AND THERE IS COMPREHENSION AND GOOD WILL ON BOTH
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SIDES.

3. IN DESCRIBING FINANCING OF 45.4 BILLION CFA FIRST STAGE OF TRANSGABON, BONGO NOTED GABONESE CONTRIBUTION OF 20 BILLION, FRENCH SEVEN BILLION (OUT OF TOTAL FRENCH PLEDGE OF 30 BILLION), US AID 1.3 MILLION AND US EXIM BANK 5.1 BILLION. BONGO DENIED RUMORS THAT RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA WOULD FINANCE PART OF PROJECT, THOUGH NOTING THAT MONEY HAD NO SMELL AND ALL MEANS WERE GOOD AS LONG AS INDEPENDENCE OF COUNTRY NOT PUT IN DANGER.

4. ACCORDING TO DENIAU' S DIRECTOR OF CABINET, BONGO WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH VISIT TO PARIS AND TO BRUSSELS, AND PARTICULARLY FRENCH REAFFIRMATION OF SUPPORT FOR TRANSGABON. DIRECTOR EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR US SUPPORT FOR PROJECT, WHICH HE SAID, PARENTHETICALLY, WAS FULLY JUSTIFIED FOR POLITICAL REASONS. IF WEST DID NOT SUPPORT GABON, HE ASKED RHETORICALLY, WHO IN AFRICA COULD IT SUPPORT. EMBOFF NOTED THAT ONLY EXIM BANK FINANCING COULD BE CONSIDERED AS DEFINITELY ASSURED, WHILE AID' S DECISION ON PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT HAS STILL NOT BEEN TAKEN. DECONTROL 12/31/73.

IRWIN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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